



## **CASE REPORT**

1. Complaint reference number	395/09
2. Advertiser	Target Australia
3. Product	Clothing
4. Type of advertisement	Internet
5. Nature of complaint	Discrimination or vilification Gender - section 2.1
6. Date of determination	Wednesday, 9 September 2009
7. DETERMINATION	Dismissed

## **DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT**

This print advertisement shows three color photo of a young man drinking milk and it is running down his face. The second and final photo has a caption which reads: "make him a bit more stylish" with a close-up of the young man's pelvis and lycra boxer short style underwear.

## **THE COMPLAINT**

A sample of comments which the complainant/s made regarding this advertisement included the following:

*Depicts men as sexual objects.*

## **THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE**

Comments which the advertiser made in response to the complaint/s regarding this advertisement included the following:

*We understand that the complaint relates to an advertisement shown in [www.ninemsn.com.au](http://www.ninemsn.com.au) for men's underwear, and in particular that the male featured in this advertisement was semi naked and depicted men as sexual objects.*

*Provided for your information is a soft copy of the "Mensfit" advertisement. We advise that this advertisement was not placed on the above website by Target, but rather by a company called Jupi Corporation who own the "Mens fit" brand which is ranged by Target. Target has however previously placed this advertisement in a number of magazines without complaint.*

*The advertisement depicts a man wearing Menslit briefs, drinking milk from carton . The milk spills down his chest and the advertisement cheekily plays on the messy male stereotype, suggesting you may not be able to change his habits but you can make him look better by changing his brand of under wear to Mensfit.*

*Target does not believe the advertisement discriminates or vilifies males or portrays any nudity or scenes that would contravene prevailing community standards. Rather, the overall tone of the television commercial is a lighthearted and fun.*

*On the basis of the above, Target does not believe the television commercial contravenes Section 2 of the AANA Advertiser Code of Ethics.*

## **THE DETERMINATION**

The Advertising Standards Board ("Board") considered whether this advertisement breaches Section

2 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics (the “Code”).

The Board noted the complainant's concern that the advertisement depicts men as sexual objects.

The Board reviewed the advertisement and considered whether the advertisement was in breach of sections 2.1 or 2.3 of the Code.

Section 2.1 of the Code relates to material which may discriminate or vilify on account of gender. Section 2.3 of the Code states that advertisements shall treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience and, where appropriate, the relevant programme time zone.

The Board agreed that the advertisement may be mildly objectifying towards men. However, the portrayal of the man in underwear was directly relevant to the product being advertised. The Board considered that the advertisement was not demeaning to men by referring to "styling up" and on the basis that the man was sufficiently clothed and not portrayed in a sexualised manner, the Board determined that the advertisement was not in breach of section 2.3 of the Code.

Finding that the advertisement did not breach the Code on other grounds, the Board dismissed the complaint.